

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – Monday, May 2, 2005

Chairman Manke called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Chair James Dwyer, County Board Supervisors Patricia Haukohl, Walter Kolb, Richard Manke, William Mitchell, Duane Paulson, Duane Stamsta.

Staff Present: Chief of Staff Lee Esler, Legislative Policy Advisor Mark Mader, Legislative Policy Advisor Dave Krahn, Office Services Coordinator Windy Jicha.

Also Present: Senator Scott Fitzgerald, County Executive Dan Finley, Chief of Staff Allison Bussler, Director of Health and Human Services Peter Schuler, Deputy Director of Health and Human Services Don Maurer, Budget Manager Keith Swartz, Director of Administration Norm Cummings, Outagamie County Lobbyist Mark Weideman, Business Manager Bob Snow.

Correspondence

- Public informational meeting announcement on the construction process of CTH Q to be held May 10 at the Village of Menomonee Falls Municipal Building.

Approve Minutes of April 11 and 18, 2005

MOTION: Paulson moved, Mitchell second, to approve the minutes of April 11, 2005. Motion carried: 7-0.

MOTION: Manke moved, Kolb second, to approve the minutes of April 18, 2005. Motion carried: 7-0.

Future Agenda Items

- Update on capital projects with emphasis on those projects at UW-Waukesha
- Presentation on the Information Systems Divisions including projects updates and Division flow chart
- Community Cost Sharing on Highway Projects

Legislative Update

Krahn distributed and briefly reviewed a handout titled “Blueprint for Possible Transitioning of Core Court Services to State Funding.” Krahn also distributed and reviewed a chart dated May 2, 2005 on the 2005 State Legislation. He gave updates on the following bills: AB 60, AB 68, AB 211, AB 79, AB 129, AB 173, AB 225, AB 220, AB 257/SB 126, AB 266, AB 293, AB 296, AB 326, AB 331 and AB 299.

Discuss and Consider Appointment 160-A-003: Appointment of Bonnie Morris to the Lower Genesee Lake Management District

MOTION: Paulson moved, Stamsta second, to approve 160-A-003. Motion carried: 7-0.

Committee Reports by Committee Chairs for the Following Meetings:

April 19, 2005 – Land Use – Kolb said the committee dealt with the Aurora issue.

April 29, 2005 – Judiciary and Law Enforcement – Mitchell said the committee heard a report on Internet crimes in Waukesha County and toured the Justice Facility addition.

April 21 and 28, 2005 – Public Works – Manke said the committee talked about a West Waukesha bypass and Highway 83. Bob Johnson gave a report on the Transit System. Johnson explained that the Commission has been waiting for two years for Waukesha County to indicate if it wanted representation on the Commission.

Esler said regarding the City Transit Commission, he suggests that the County Executive's office handle the request for county representatives on the five-member commission. Regarding the issue of the West Waukesha bypass, Dewayne Johnson and Elaine Schwitzer of WisDOT said the bypass has been on hold since 1986/87 because there was no local government support from all local jurisdictions.

Esler said the impasse on improvements to HWY 83 from I-94 to HWY 16 is due to the state's local cost sharing policy of 25% by municipalities. The state prohibits any breach in cost sharing. When the state doesn't add anything to the state system, the traffic diverts to the county trunk system, which in turn increases the workload on the county system.

Dwyer asked Esler to draft a resolution on the county's support for a West Waukesha bypass to be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Bussler said the Director of WisDOT said before proceeding with the bypass the state needs the buy-in from the county, city and town. Since the last time the Town of Waukesha discussed this, there has been a lot of turnover on the board and this may be approved now. The county needs the town to pass a resolution before the state can move forward.

April 28, 2005 – Health and Human Services – Stamsta said this was a joint meeting of the board and committee. The committee elected Jim Jeskewitz as the new Vice-Chair to fill the opening left by Joe Griffin. Vera Stroud, a Health and Human Services Board member, would like the County Board to suggest a means of cost containment at the state level to control health care costs in Wisconsin.

April 20, 2005 – Finance – Haukohl said the committee considered ordinances to amend the Sheriff's Department budget due to seized funds and HHS budget to accept state funding for the homeless, mentally ill. The committee discussed the cost/benefit of two-lane versus four-lane county roads and Information Systems Division flow chart and reviewed reports on year-end liability and worker's compensation claims payable reserve, year-end special revenue funds and tax incremental financing.

Discussion with State Legislators on the 2005-2007 State Budget

Fitzgerald said the Republican Caucus hoped the governor would come out with a budget with lots of reforms but the budget is status quo. There are lots of transfers of money from different pots so the budget balances. Bonding, bonding interest and delayed payments create revenue in his budget. The Joint Committee on Finance held public meetings throughout the state to discuss the budget. Each member of the Governor's cabinet talked about budget requests and where they ended up in the budget. There is a huge gap between what was requested and the final outcome. The caucuses are negotiating revenues and working to cut packages but there isn't much flexibility. Jensen suspects a freeze will be in the final budget. He expects the budget process will end in early June.

Dwyer said people are concerned that state mandated services should be paid for by state funds not county property taxes. If the state took over their responsibilities, counties could lower property taxes.

Snow said the budget requires interpreter access for all criminal and civil proceedings regardless of indigency. The current state funding is not enough to cover the current services let alone cover the programs as they grow. Fitzgerald said they dealt with the interpreter issue last week. The caucus is setting parameters to spend GPR money on programs. There are bills in the legislature now to pick up the full cost of interpreters but he doesn't know if there will be action on them in this budget.

Snow said nothing is provided to cover the costs of interpreters. Waukesha County has been successful with court-appointed counsel recovery. Will the counties be able to recover some of the interpreter costs?

Krahn said Chief Justice Abrahamson said the courts don't know who should reimburse these costs. It's not clear if the federal government precludes states or counties from doing so. The PPAC Committee filed a report containing suggestions on how the state could incrementally pick up court costs in phases. Fitzgerald said there has been a huge shift in Hmong and Hispanic populations in the state. Who will provide and pay for the necessary interpreters?

Cummings said in regards to a tax freeze and levy restraint program, it looks like there will be a property tax limit, which is counter productive in Waukesha County. Waukesha County invests in roads to assist in the creation of businesses. Waukesha County is a AAA rated county and one thing they mention is the county's ability to be financially flexible. Counties aren't able to be as flexible with some tax freeze plans. One plan has a referendum requirement. It would be difficult to convince county residents living on the south side of the county to vote for a needed road project on the north side without spending lots of time, effort and money. Counties get different types of revenues other than taxes such as fees and grants and a levy restraint program would restrict the amount counties could collect.

Dwyer said he doesn't want the state to enact a constitutional amendment on fiscal policies because it would restrict growth in Waukesha County. Waukesha County is one of the few AAA bond rated counties in the United States.

Maurer said the transfer of financial responsibility for ICFMR (Intermediate Care Facility – Mentally Retarded) from state to county takes effect in the current budget. The initiative may be a good idea but shifting the costs to the counties is a concern. The transfer included a presumed rate of \$140 per day for the most integrated settings. Waukesha County has potentially 61 people under this plan. Three assessments have been completed and the county has found costs between \$200 to \$225 per day for service. If you multiply this amount by the number of people in need, there could be a \$1.5 million shortfall.

Maurer said he also has concerns for quality of life issues surrounding CIP II nursing home relocations. The budget for the relocation of nursing home residents to community placements through CIP II waiver is \$71 per day. Waukesha County has approximately 262 nursing home residents that meet the criteria for relocation. The state should fund the actual cost of relocation rather than assuming a rate of \$71 per day will be sufficient to cover costs. The concern is that costs may exceed \$71 per day and lead to a decreased ability of the county to service existing clients.

Schuler said he is not sure how the state comes up with these amounts. A state workgroup with county representatives might come closer to actual costs. Youth aids have not increased in quite awhile and the county's correction rates continue to increase.

Schueler said Community Aids have not increased in 18 years. Without an increase, the county has to increase its contribution to fund statutory programs. The biggest workload change in Waukesha County is in the Income Maintenance programs. The lack of inflationary increases plus additional mandated services will likely require additional tax levy of at least \$130K or significant reductions that could impact the county in meeting federal performance standards that may result in sanction and higher costs to the county. Since 1997, income maintenance programs caseloads have increased significantly. In 1997, W2 workers carried caseloads of 160 and today their caseloads are up to 367. Income maintenance workers have a Badger Care caseload of 316 cases. There are a lot of services underfunded.

Fitzgerald said Youth Aids might see a slight increase in funding but he doesn't anticipate any increases in Community Aids. He isn't sure what is happening with ICMFR funding. He will have to do some follow up work and get back to the committee.

Finley said in order to support the state's economy the UW Board of Regents has directed two-year colleges to offer higher-level degrees. The problem is that the 12, two-year colleges in Wisconsin are partnered with county governments. He's concerned with the fairness of Waukesha County property taxpayers paying for a four-year school when other counties don't have to pay for the four-year campuses in their areas. The original mission of the two-year campuses needs to be maintained. The schools need to be accessible to kids who aren't academically or financially ready to take on four-year institutions. A lot of the students from surrounding counties attend UW-Waukesha, which is paid for by Waukesha County residents. The four-year colleges are funded by the state and tuition.

Finley is happy with the notion of transferring UW-Waukesha to the state whether it is an independent, four-year or hybrid college doesn't matter. What matters is getting kids an education. If one were to plan the UW system today, it wouldn't look like it does today. How do we change the state's higher education system for the 21st century with respect to the state and local taxpayers? This change wouldn't create a dramatic drop in property taxes but would focus on a fairness issue. County government shouldn't be in the higher education business. Higher education is so sophisticated that counties can't keep up with the changes.

Dwyer said UW-Waukesha is a 40-year-old facility. The county didn't do any maintenance in the buildings for 30 years and then over the last ten years completed capital projects totaling \$1million annually. Once the current projects are completed, the facility wouldn't need any major improvements unless expansion was needed. Dwyer is aware that the UW system would like to see more of a research presence and four-year degrees at this facility.

Fitzgerald said we have the attention of the UW Regents. The UW system isn't creating the needed bachelor degrees.

Finley said he wants to be clear that this change would only occur at UW-Waukesha. UW-Waukesha's campus is radically different from the other two-year facilities because it is located in an urban area and draws students from beyond the county borders. Fitzgerald said a lot of people see this as the start of a debate.

Kolb said a constitutional amendment is the only way all government entities will control their budgets. Regarding grants, Waukesha County has employees who need to find grant money to cover their salaries in order to keep their jobs. Some of these grants are useless and do more harm than good. Kolb agrees with Finley on the UW-Waukesha issue. He believes something has to be done with mandates so the state can't continue to dump stuff on local governments. The idea is to cut taxes.

Manke said a constitutional amendment is a farce. He is concerned about SB 142. There is a huge waiting list for the alternatives to incarceration treatment programs. We are putting lots of people in jail that aren't bad. We are spending lots of money on a jail when we should be looking for ways to treat people.

Fitzgerald said if the state doesn't add beds to prisons, then it will have to pay to send prisoners out-of-state. Manke said something needs to be done besides putting them in jail or else they do the same things when they are released. Fitzgerald said the state is in a reactionary mode with corrections.

Manke said the beer tax hasn't increased in a long time. An increase would provide a tremendous amount of revenue.

Dwyer said Waukesha County has the CJCC looking at options that work. The CJCC applied for a grant for a drug/alcohol court for second and third-time OWI offenders.

Mitchell said there is a limited amount of money to solve the problems. We can work together to solve the problems. The state doesn't want to penalize counties for bringing in more money.

Haukohl said she can support the UW-Waukesha issue but she has some concerns. It is important that a certain percentage of the students at the school come from Waukesha County and represent Waukesha taxpayers. It is also important to plan for students who live at home and don't have a lot of money for tuition. She likes the task force Jensen mentioned that would help prepare UW-Waukesha for a smooth transition from a two-year to a four-year school. Do you see a need to cut programs and if so which ones?

Fitzgerald said a hot topic is four-year-old kindergartens because cutting these programs would save \$80 million. Local districts could go to referendum if they want to continue the program. The amount given in shared revenues and expenditure restraint programs should be reviewed.

Finley said shared revenue isn't the biggest revenue source for Waukesha County from the state. He would give up shared revenues in exchange for the machinery and equipment revenue the state collects from Waukesha County. He is fine with Waukesha County earning more money unless the state wants a percentage of it.

Dwyer said an expenditure restraint budget would punish Waukesha County and help other parts of the state. Fitzgerald said there are ways to implement a freeze proposal to create revenue streams at the state level that allow local governments to collect funds. Should the state collect money and then redistribute it out or should the system be decentralized and counties allowed to make these decisions?

Paulson said he's concerned with a constitutional amendment. If you change the constitution, it will be that way for 100 years.

Fitzgerald recently heard the governor of Colorado talk about TABOR. Twenty-six states have some type of provision to control spending. All the provisions are different. There's a lot of support in the Assembly and Senate to slow the rate of growth in government. They don't want a referendum.

Motion to Adjourn

MOTION: Mitchell moved, Haukohl second, to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Motion carried: 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter Kolb
Secretary